

**Food security deteriorates following flooding and increasing food prices**

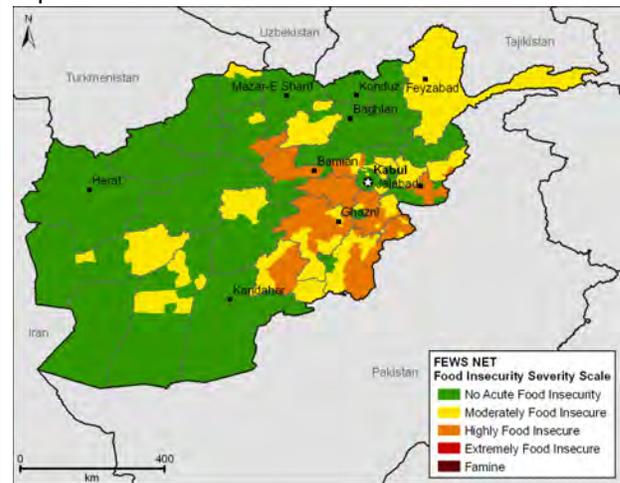
**Key Messages**

- Food security conditions are expected to remain stable or improve in surplus producing agricultural provinces in the north, northeast, and western parts of Afghanistan with the exception of Badakhshan and Farah provinces. This improvement is as result of gradual increase in wheat prices which promises better income for producers and a second consecutive above average harvest.
- Food security conditions are expected to deteriorate in the production-deficit provinces in southern, eastern, and central Afghanistan where localized poor harvests, recent flooding, and an increase in regional wheat prices as result of a below-average harvest in Kazakhstan and a Russian ban on wheat exports have all constrained food access and availability. Nonetheless, the projected deterioration of food security conditions is not expected to be as severe as during the 2008.
- July wheat market prices remained below the July five-year average in all reference markets with the exception of Faizabad market where July wheat prices are about average. However, in comparison to June 2010, July wheat market prices increased in all reference markets with exception of Faizabad.

**Updated food security outlook through December 2010**

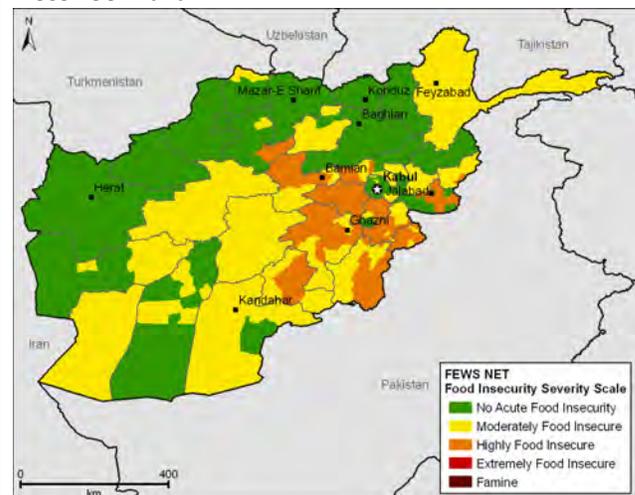
Food security conditions are expected to remain stable or improve in surplus producing agricultural provinces in the north, northeast, and western parts of Afghanistan with the exception of Badakhshan and Farah provinces (Figures 1 and 2). This projection is based on the fact that wheat prices have increased steadily and are expected to continue to increase over the coming months, increasing profits for local producers. In comparison to June wheat market prices, July wheat prices increased by 16 percent in Hirat and 8 percent in Mazar despite a second consecutive above-average cereal harvest. However, food security will likely deteriorate in the production-deficit provinces in southern, eastern, and central Afghanistan where localized poor harvests, recent flooding, and an increase in regional wheat prices (as result of a below-average harvest in Kazakhstan and a Russian ban on wheat exports) have all constrained food access and availability. One exception is Helmand province in the south, which typically produces a surplus. Nonetheless, the projected deterioration of

**Figure 1. Estimated food security outcomes, August-September**



Source: FEWS NET

**Figure 2. Estimated food security outcomes, September-December 2010**



Source: FEWS NET

For more information on FEWS NET's Food Insecurity Severity Scale, please see: [www.fews.net/FoodInsecurityScale](http://www.fews.net/FoodInsecurityScale)

*This report provides an update to the July 2010 FEWS NET Food Security Outlook report which estimated food security conditions from July through December 2010. The next Outlook report will be released in October 2010 and will cover the October 2010 to March 2011 period.*

food security conditions is not expected to be as severe as during the 2008 food price crisis because world wheat stocks are in better shape this year, the WFP pipeline is secured until January 2011, and the Afghan government has approximately 70,000 tons of wheat grain in strategic grain reserves.

July wheat market prices remained below the July five-year average in all reference markets with the exception of Faizabad market where July wheat prices are about average. However, in comparison to June 2010, July wheat market prices steadily increased in all reference markets, with exception of Faizabad, contrary to the typical seasonal pattern. This is a result of increase in wheat prices in Pakistan and Kazakhstan, which are the main exporters to Afghanistan, and the month of Ramadan where food price typically increase. Wheat prices are likely to increase further as rural Afghans’ demand for wheat increases during the months of September, October, and November as they build stocks in anticipation of winter. In addition, regional wheat market prices are expected to increase in the short-run following news that the 2010 Kazakh cereal harvest is anticipated to be 22 percent below average and because of massive flooding in Pakistan. This will impact poor household’s access to food, particularly in the Paktya, Paktika, Farah and Day Kundi Provinces, areas identified as at-risk of food insecurity in the July food security outlook.

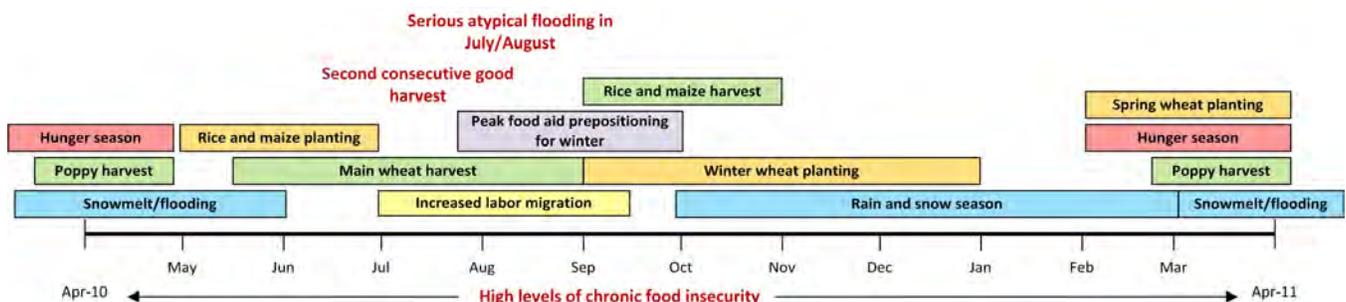
In August 2010, devastating floods hit Paktya and Day Kundi Provinces. Standing crops and food stocks were washed away, thousands of livestock were killed, and hundreds of houses were destroyed. At a national level, according to an ADMA report, an estimated 192 people have died and OCHA reports indicate that approximately 15,000 people are affected and thousands of homes were destroyed. This figure could increase once provincial reports come through. Though the affected households have received assistance to meet immediate needs, plans for longer term assistance until the next harvests are unclear. Households in Day Kundi province expect to receive the same level of remittances from Iran but the bulk of remittances will be used to rebuild livelihoods and housing rather than to purchase food. Thus, affected households are likely to be highly food insecure, assuming that additional food assistance is not delivered.

Given the level of flood damage in Pakistan, where nearly a quarter of the population is affected, remittances from Pakistan are likely to decrease significantly over the coming months. This will affect the income of poor households in Paktya and Paktika Provinces making it harder for poor households to purchase their needed food from markets, particularly given the rise in wheat prices, and limited coping options. Income from firewood sales will improve as demand for firewood increases during the coming months in anticipation of winter, though firewood is scarce this year to year as a result of heavy deforestation. Overall, poor households in Paktya and Paktika are expected to be highly food insecure between August and December, assuming that additional assistance is not allocated.

The food security of poor households in Farah Province is also expected to deteriorate also as result of increased wheat prices but conditions are not expected to be as severe as in other areas because no additional shocks have occurred. Therefore, Farah province is expected to remain moderately food insecure.

In addition to the above-mentioned areas of concern, food security conditions of flood affected households in the following provinces (Nangarhar, Kunar, Laghman, Ghazni, Parwan, Wardak, Kapisa, Logor, Sar-i-Pul and Paktya, Paktika and Khust) are likely to be highly food insecure over the coming months as received assistance is not enough to meet food needs until the next harvest.

**Seasonal calendar and critical events timeline**



Source: FEWS NET